GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
EXTERNAL AFFAIRS
LOK SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:2670
ANSWERED ON:06.12.2000
VISIT OF MYANMARESE LEADER
HOLKHOMANG HAOKIP;Y.S. VIVEKANANDA REDDY

Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Union Government had given formal invitation to Myanmarese leader General Maung Aye to visit India;

(b) if so, the details of the issues discussed and the outcome thereof; (

(c) whether the issue of further expanding the Indo-Myanmar trade was also discussed;

(d) if so, the details thereof; and

(e) the way his visit is likely to further strengthen the relationship between the two countries?`

Answer

MINISTER OF STATE FOR EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI AJIT KUMAR PANJA)

(a)- (e) General Maung Aye, Vice Chairman, State Peace & Development Council of the Union of Myanmar, visited India from November 14-21, 2000 at the invitation of the Vice President. The Joint Statement issued on the conclusion ofthe visit is laid on the Table of the House.

JOINT STATEMENT ON THE VISIT TO INDIA BY GEN. MAUNG AYE, VICE CHAIRMAN STATE PEACE & DEVELOP COUNCIL, MYANMAR

1. H.E. General Maung Aye, Vice Chairman, State Peace & Development Council (SPDC), Deputy Commander-in-Chief, Myanmar Defence Forces and Commander-in-Chief, Myanmar Army paid a seven day visit to India from 14 to 21 November, 2000 at the invitation of H.E. Shri. Krishan Kant, Vice President of India. General Maung Aye was accompanied by a high-level delegation consisting of H.E. Lt. Gen. Tin Oo, Secretary-2, SPDC, H.E. Lt. Gen. Tin Hla, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Military Affair H.E. Maj. Gen. Soe Win, Member of the SPDC and Commander of the North-West Command, H.E. U Win Aung, Minister for Foreig Affairs, H.E. U Aung Thaung, Minister for Industry-I, H.E. U Khin Maung Thein, Minister for Finance and Revenue, H.E. U Thaun Minister for Science and Technology, H.E. Maj. Gen. Tin Htut, Minister for Electric Power, H.E. Brig. Gen. Pyi Sone, Minister fo Commerce and H.E. U Khin Maung Kyaw, Dy. Minister of Industry-II, and other senior officials.

2. During this visit, the leaders of the two countries held discussions on bilateral, regional and international issues. They discussed measures to create favourable conditions for the rapid development of bilateral relations.

3. Relations between India and Myanmar are civilizational in nature and rooted in a common cultural and religious heritage and geographical contiguity. Leaders of both countries have always maintained a tradition of high level exchanges and personal rapport. With the visit by General Maung Aye this process has been enhanced.

4. In Delhi, H.E. General Maung Aye and Daw Mya Mya San were accorded a warm ceremonial welcome by H.E. Shri Krishan Kant, Vice President of India and Shrimati Suman Krishan Kant. H.E. General Maung Aye and Daw Mya Mya San called on H.E. Shri K.R. Narayanan, President of India and Shrimati Usha Narayanan. He held discussions with H.E. the Vice President, H.E. Shri Atal Bihari Vajpayee, Prime Minister, H.E. Shri Jaswant Singh, Minister of External Affairs, H.E. Shri L.K. Advani, Home Minister, Shri Omar Farooq Abdulla, Minister of State for Commerce & Industry, and Shrimati Sonia Gandhi, Leader of Opposition.

5. The discussions between the Prime Minister and the Vice Chairman, State Peace & Development Council covered a wide range of areas, including economic cooperation, trade, cross border projects and activities, international terrorism, drug trafficking, cooperation in the field of culture, human resource development, science and technology, and regional cooperation within the framework of BIMST-EC, of which both countries are members, as also under the aegis of India-ASEAN dialogue partnership. The two sides expressed satisfaction at the all round progress in relations in the past few years. At the same time, it was agreed that the present level of interaction, specially in the economic and commercial fields did not reflect the potential of such relations. Both sides reaffirmed their desire to promote bilateral relations to a qualitatively higher and dynamic stage. They also agreed that they could benefit from various regional cooperation programmes in which they are participating, such as BIMST-EC and In dia-ASEAN cooperation.

6. The two sides agreed to take steps to ensure peace and tranquillity along the India-Myanmar border, and to give content to cross border cooperation, which would directly benefit populations living on both sides of the border. They recognized the need to establish

the necessary infrastructure in terms of cross border transport and communication links, promote more frequent exchanges both at the government and people-to-people level, and actively encourage the business communities of both countries to take advantage of the many economic complementarities between the two countries. The Tamu-Kalemyo highway which will link India`s north-east with the western part of the Myanmar and beyond would contribute significantly to this cross border cooperation. The highway is expected to be handed over soon to the Myanmar Government.

7. The two sides also discussed progress in other proposed cross border projects, viz. the Tamanthi Hydroelectric project and the Kaladan River Navigation, Road and Gas Pipeline Project, and agreed to take necessary steps to expedite ongoing investigations and feasibility studies.

8. An agreement to extend a US$ 15 million Indian credit to Myanmar was signed during the visit by the Finance Ministers of the two countries. Both sides noted with satisfaction that an earlier Indian credit of US$ 10 million was utilized by the Myanmar side for setting up industrial plants and for supply of railway rolling stock. The new credit line will also be used for sourcing industrial and electrical equipment from India.

9. During his stay in India H.E. General Maung Aye and his delegation visited places of Buddhist pilgrimage.General Maung Aye also travelled to Bangalore where he visited a number of scientific and industrial establishments and organisations working in the fields of Information Technology, industrial and agricultural machinery, electronics, agriculture, aeronautics and space research. In Delhi, the Confederation of Indian Industry hosted a luncheon in honour of General Maung Aye and his delegation to enable them to meet and interact with leading Indian businessmen and industrialists and discuss possibilities of cooperation. General Maung Aye and his delegation also visited Agra and Udaipur.

10. H.E. General Maung Aye extended a cordial invitation to H.E. Shri Krishan Kant, Vice President of India to pay an official visit to Myanmar. The invitation was accepted with pleasure. Mutually convenient dates for the visit will be decided through diplomatic channels.

11. On behalf of H.E. Senior General Than Shwe , Chairman State Peace & Development Council and Prime Minister of Myanmar General Maung Aye extended cordial invitations to H.E. Shri K.R. Narayanan, President of India and Shri Atal Bihari Vajpayee, Prime Minister of India, respectively to pay visits to Myanmar.The invitations were accepted with pleasure and mutually convenient dates would be decided through diplomatic channels. The President and Prime Minister of India respectively requested H.E. General Maung Aye to convey to H.E. Senior General Than Shwe an invitation to visit India at a mutually convenient date.

12. The Myanmar delegation thanked the Government and people of India for the warm and friendly reception and gracious hospitality extended to the delegation.